

## Microdata Entry Page

The Microdata web pages provide comprehensive information about microdata produced by the ABS. Click on the links to the left to find out what datasets are available and how microdata have been used. Click on the links below to find out more about the modes of access and to apply for access.

**CURF**

Confidentialised Unit Record Files (CURFs) are files of responses to ABS surveys containing very detailed data while also protecting the confidentiality of individuals.

**RADL**

Remote Access Data Laboratory (RADL) is a secure online data query service that interrogates the CURF microdata. This service is for approved clients.

**ABSDL**

ABS Data Laboratory (ABSDL) is the data analysis solution for high-end data users who want to extract full value from ABS microdata. This service is available from all ABS sites around Australia.

**TableBuilder**

Survey TableBuilder an online tool for creating tables and graphs from ABS survey data. This tool has been developed to increase the accessibility of microdata.

**Analysis Service**

Coming soon!

Analysis Service is an online tool for exploring ABS microdata. Clients will be able to undertake regression analyses, produce confidentialised scatterplots and use in-depth analysis techniques.

**MiCRO**

Register, apply, review and manage your approved CURF microdata access from here.

This page last updated 15 March 2013

# Expected and available Microdata

## EXPECTED MICRODATA

| Title and Reference Period  | Format              |                     | Expected Timing |
|---|---------------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| Microdata: Australian Health Survey, First Results, 2011-13                                 | Survey TableBuilder |                     | Mid 2013        |
| Microdata: Barriers & Incentives and Retirement & Retirement Intentions, Australia, 2010-11 | Survey TableBuilder |                     | Mid 2013        |
| Microdata: Childhood, Education and Care, Australia, 2011                                   | Survey TableBuilder |                     | Mid 2013        |
| Microdata: Crime Victimisation, Australia, 2010-11  | Survey TableBuilder |                     | Mid 2013        |
| Microdata: Crime Victimisation, Australia, 2011-12  | Survey TableBuilder |                     | Mid 2013        |
| Microdata: Community Engagement with Nature Conservation, Australia, 2011-12                | Survey TableBuilder |                     | Mid 2013        |
| Microdata: Household Use of Information Technology, Australia, 2010-11                      | Survey TableBuilder |                     | Mid 2013        |
| Microdata: Learning and Work, Australia, 2010-11  | Survey TableBuilder |                     | Mid 2013        |
| Microdata: Participation in Selected Cultural Activities, Australia, 2010-11                | Survey TableBuilder |                     | Mid 2013        |
| Microdata: Participation in Sport and Physical Recreation, Australia, 2010-11               | Survey TableBuilder |                     | Mid 2013        |
| Microdata: Participation in Sport and Physical Recreation, Australia, 2011-12               | Expanded CURF       | Survey TableBuilder | Mid 2013        |
| Microdata: Patient Experiences in Australia, 2010-11  | Survey TableBuilder |                     | Mid 2013        |
| Microdata: Business Longitudinal Database, Australia, 2006-07 to 2010-11                    | Expanded CURF       | Mid 2013            |                 |
| Microdata: Employee Earning and Hours, Australia, May 2012                                  | Expanded CURF       | Mid 2013            |                 |
| Microdata: Income and Housing, Australia, 2011-12   | Basic CURF          | Expanded CURF       | Mid 2013        |
| Microdata: Patient Experiences in Australia, 2011-12  | Survey TableBuilder |                     | Mid 2013        |
| Microdata: Pregnancy and Employment Transitions, Australia, Nov 2011                        | Expanded CURF       |                     | Mid 2013        |

## AVAILABLE MICRODATA

### A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

#### A

|   |             |               |
|---|-------------|---------------|
| Microdata: Adult Literacy and Lifeskills, Australia, 2006             | Basic CURF  | Expanded CURF |
| Microdata: Aspects of Literacy, Australia, 1996                       | Basic CURF* |               |
| Microdata: Australian Housing Survey, 1999                            | Basic CURF  |               |
| Microdata: Australian Housing Survey, 1994                            | Basic CURF  |               |
| Microdata: Australians' Employment and Unemployment Patterns, 1994-97 | Basic CURF* | Expanded CURF |

\* Contact [microdata.access@abs.gov.au](mailto:microdata.access@abs.gov.au) for supporting documentation

#### B

|  |               |
|--|---------------|
| Microdata: Business Longitudinal Database, Australia, 2004-05 to 2009-10 Reissue           | Expanded CURF |
| Microdata: Business Longitudinal Database, Australia, 2004-05, 2005-06 and 2006-07 Reissue | Expanded CURF |
| Microdata: Business Longitudinal Survey, Australia, 1994-95 and 1997-98                    | Basic CURF    |

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#### C

|   |                     |               |
|---|---------------------|---------------|
| Microdata: Census of Population and Housing, 2011             | Census TableBuilder |               |
| Microdata: Census of Population and Housing Sample File, 2006 | Basic CURF          | Expanded CURF |
| Microdata: Census of Population and Housing Sample File, 2001 | Basic CURF          | Expanded CURF |
| Microdata: Census of Population and Housing Sample File, 1996 | Basic CURF          |               |

|  |             |               |                     |
|--|-------------|---------------|---------------------|
| Microdata: Census of Population and Housing Sample File, 1991      | Basic CURF  |               |                     |
| Microdata: Census of Population and Housing Sample File, 1986      | Basic CURF  |               |                     |
| Microdata: Census of Population and Housing Sample File, 1981      | Basic CURF  |               |                     |
| Microdata: Characteristics of Recent Migrants, Australia, Nov 2010 |             | Expanded CURF | Survey TableBuilder |
| Microdata: Childhood Education and Care, Australia, Jun 2011       |             | Expanded CURF |                     |
| Microdata: Childhood Education and Care, Australia, Jun 2008       |             | Expanded CURF |                     |
| Microdata: Child Care, Australia, Jun 2005 Reissue                 |             | Expanded CURF |                     |
| Microdata: Child Care, Australia, Jun 2002                         |             | Expanded CURF |                     |
| Microdata: Child Care, Australia, Jun 1999                         | Basic CURF  | Expanded CURF |                     |
| Microdata: Child Care, Australia, Mar 1996                         | Basic CURF* |               |                     |
| Microdata: Child Care, Australia, Jun 1993                         | Basic CURF* |               |                     |
| Microdata: Child Care Arrangements, Australia, 1984                | Basic CURF* |               |                     |
| Microdata: Crime and Safety, Australia, 2005                       |             | Expanded CURF |                     |
| Microdata: Crime and Safety, Australia, 2002                       |             | Expanded CURF |                     |
| Microdata: Crime Victimisation, Australia, 2009-10                 |             | Expanded CURF |                     |

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## D

|  |             |  |                     |
|--|-------------|--|---------------------|
| Microdata: Disability Ageing and Carers, Australia, 2009 Reissue | Basic CURF  |  | Survey TableBuilder |
| Microdata: Disability Ageing and Carers, Australia, 2003 Reissue | Basic CURF  |  | Survey TableBuilder |
| Microdata: Disability Ageing and Carers, Australia, 1998         | Basic CURF  |  |                     |
| Microdata: Domiciliary Services Victoria, Australia, 1986        | Basic CURF* |  |                     |

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## E

|  |             |               |                     |
|--|-------------|---------------|---------------------|
| Microdata: Education and Training, Australia, 2009   | Basic CURF  | Expanded CURF |                     |
| Microdata: Education and Training, Australia, 2005   | Basic CURF  | Expanded CURF |                     |
| Microdata: Education and Training Experience, Australia, 1997                                    | Basic CURF  |               |                     |
| Microdata: Education and Training Experience, Australia, 1993                                    | Basic CURF  |               |                     |
| Microdata: Education and Training Experience, Australia, 1989                                    | Basic CURF* |               |                     |
| Microdata: Education and Work, Australia, May 2011   | Basic CURF  |               | Survey TableBuilder |
| Microdata: Education and Work, Australia, May 2009   | Basic CURF  |               |                     |
| Microdata: Education and Work, Australia, May 2007   | Basic CURF  |               |                     |
| Microdata: Education and Work, Australia, May 2005   | Basic CURF  |               |                     |
| Microdata: Education and Work, Australia, May 2003   | Basic CURF  |               |                     |
| Microdata: Education and Work, May 2001  | Basic CURF  |               |                     |
| Microdata: Education Training and Information Technology, Australia, 2001                        | Basic CURF  |               |                     |
| Microdata: Employee Earnings and Hours, Australia, May 2010                                      |             | Expanded CURF |                     |
| Microdata: Employee Earnings and Hours, Australia, May 2006                                      |             | Expanded CURF |                     |
| Microdata: Employment Arrangements and Superannuation, Australia, 2000                           |             | Expanded CURF |                     |
| Microdata: Employment Arrangements, Retirement and Superannuation, Australia, April to July 2007 |             | Expanded CURF |                     |

\* Contact [microdata.access@abs.gov.au](mailto:microdata.access@abs.gov.au) for supporting documentation

## F

|   |            |               |  |
|---|------------|---------------|--|
| Microdata: Families in Australia, March to May 1992                   | Basic CURF |               |  |
| Microdata: Family Characteristics, Australia, 2009-10                 |            | Expanded CURF |  |
| Microdata: Family Characteristics and Transitions, Australia, 2006-07 |            | Expanded CURF |  |
| Microdata: Family Characteristics, Australia, 2003                    |            | Expanded CURF |  |
| Microdata: Forms of Employment, Australia, Aug 1998                   | Basic CURF |               |  |

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## G

|   |            |               |
|---|------------|---------------|
| Microdata: General Social Survey, Australia, 2010 | Basic CURF | Expanded CURF |
| Microdata: General Social Survey, Australia, 2006 | Basic CURF | Expanded CURF |

## H

|  |             |               |
|--|-------------|---------------|
| Microdata: Household Expenditure Survey and Survey of Income and Housing, Australia, 2009-10 Second Edition incl. Fiscal Incidence Study | Basic CURF  | Expanded CURF |
| Microdata: Household Expenditure Survey and Survey of Income and Housing, Australia, 2003-04 Third Edition incl. Fiscal Incidence Study  | Basic CURF  | Expanded CURF |
| Microdata: Household Expenditure, Australia, 1998-99, Third Edition incl. Fiscal Incidence Study   | Basic CURF  |               |
| Microdata: Household Expenditure, Australia, 1993-94   | Basic CURF* |               |
| Microdata: Household Expenditure Survey, Australia, 1988-89, Second Edition  | Basic CURF  |               |
| Microdata: Household Expenditure, Australia, 1984  | Basic CURF  |               |
| Microdata: Household Expenditure, Australia, 1975-76   | Basic CURF  |               |

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## I

|  |             |               |
|--|-------------|---------------|
| Microdata: Income and Housing, Australia, 2007-08 Reissue          | Basic CURF  | Expanded CURF |
| Microdata: Income and Housing, Australia, 2005-06                  | Basic CURF  | Expanded CURF |
| Microdata: Income and Housing, Australia, 2005-06, Second Edition  | Basic CURF  | Expanded CURF |
| Microdata: Income and Housing, Australia, 2002-03                  | Basic CURF  | Expanded CURF |
| Microdata: Income and Housing, Australia, 2000-01                  | Basic CURF* | Expanded CURF |
| Microdata: Income and Housing, Australia, 1997-98                  | Basic CURF  |               |
| Microdata: Income and Housing, Australia, 1996-97                  | Basic CURF  |               |
| Microdata: Income and Housing, Australia, 1995-96                  | Basic CURF  |               |
| Microdata: Income and Housing, Australia, 1994-95                  | Basic CURF  |               |
| Microdata: Income and Housing, Australia, 1981-82                  | Basic CURF  |               |
| Microdata: Income and Housing Costs, Australia, 1999-2000          | Basic CURF  |               |
| Microdata: Income and Housing Costs and Amenities, Australia, 1990 | Basic CURF  |               |
| Microdata: Income and Housing Costs and Amenities, Australia, 1986 | Basic CURF  |               |

|   |  |               |
|---|--|---------------|
| Microdata: Innovation in Australian Business, Australia, 2003 |  | Expanded CURF |
|---|--|---------------|

\* Contact [microdata.access@abs.gov.au](mailto:microdata.access@abs.gov.au) for supporting documentation

## L

|   |            |               |
|---|------------|---------------|
| Microdata: Labour Force Status and Other Characteristics of Recent Migrants, Australia, Nov 2007              |            | Expanded CURF |
| Microdata: Labour Force Survey and Employee Earnings Benefits and Trade Union Membership, Australia, Aug 2010 | Basic CURF | Expanded CURF |
| Microdata: Labour Force Survey and Employee Earnings Benefits and Trade Union Membership, Australia, Aug 2008 | Basic CURF | Expanded CURF |
| Microdata: Labour Force Survey and Employee Earnings Benefits and Trade Union Membership, Australia, Aug 2006 | Basic CURF | Expanded CURF |
| Microdata: Labour Force Survey and Employee Earnings Benefits and Trade Union Membership, Australia, Aug 2004 | Basic CURF |               |
| Microdata: Labour Force Survey and Forms of Employment Survey, Australia, Nov 2008                            | Basic CURF | Expanded CURF |
| Microdata: Labour Force Survey and Labour Mobility, Australia, Feb 2012                                       | Basic CURF | Expanded CURF |
| Microdata: Labour Force Survey and Labour Mobility, Australia, Feb 2010                                       | Basic CURF | Expanded CURF |
| Microdata: Labour Force Survey and Labour Mobility, Australia, Feb 2008                                       | Basic CURF | Expanded CURF |
| Microdata: Labour Force Survey and Labour Mobility, Australia, Feb 2006                                       | Basic CURF |               |
| Microdata: Labour Mobility, Australia, 1994   | Basic CURF |               |
| Microdata: Labour Mobility, Australia, 1991   | Basic CURF |               |
| Microdata: Labour Mobility, Australia, 1984   | Basic CURF |               |
| Microdata: Longitudinal Labour Force, Australia, 2008-10  |            | Expanded CURF |

## M

|   |            |               |
|---|------------|---------------|
| Microdata: Mental Health and Wellbeing of Adults, Australia, 1997 Reissue | Basic CURF |               |
| Microdata: Multipurpose Household Survey, Australia, 2008-09 Reissue      |            | Expanded CURF |
| Microdata: Multipurpose Household Survey, Australia, 2007-08              |            | Expanded CURF |
| Microdata: Multipurpose Household Survey, Australia, 2006-07              |            | Expanded CURF |
| Microdata: Multipurpose Household Survey, Australia, 2005-06              |            | Expanded CURF |
| Microdata: Multipurpose Household Survey, Australia, 2004-05              |            | Expanded CURF |

## N

|   |             |               |
|---|-------------|---------------|
| Microdata: National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Survey, Australia, 1994   | Basic CURF  | Expanded CURF |
| Microdata: National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey, State/Territory, Australia, 2004-05                        |             | Expanded CURF |
| Microdata: National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey, State/Territory by ASGC Remoteness, Australia, 2004-05     |             | Expanded CURF |
| Microdata: National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey Detailed State/Territory by Remoteness, Australia, 2008     |             | Expanded CURF |
| Microdata: National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey State/Territory, Australia, 2008 Reissue                    |             | Expanded CURF |
| Microdata: National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey State/Territory by ASGC Remoteness, Australia, 2008 Reissue |             | Expanded CURF |
| Microdata: National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey State/Territory, Australia, 2002                            |             | Expanded CURF |
| Microdata: National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey State/Territory by ASGC Remoteness, Australia, 2002         |             | Expanded CURF |
| Microdata: National Health Indigenous, Australia, 2001  |             | Expanded CURF |
| Microdata: National Health Survey, Australia, 2007-08 Reissue   | Basic CURF  | Expanded CURF |
| Microdata: National Health Survey, Australia, 2004-05   | Basic CURF  | Expanded CURF |
| Microdata: National Health Survey, Australia, 2001 Reissue  | Basic CURF  | Expanded CURF |
| Microdata: National Health Survey, Australia, 1995  | Basic CURF  |               |
| Microdata: National Health Survey, Australia, 1989-90   | Basic CURF  |               |
| Microdata: National Health Survey, Australia, 1983  | Basic CURF* |               |
| Microdata: National Health Survey, Australia, 1977-78   | Basic CURF* |               |
| Microdata: National Nutrition Survey, Australia, 1995   | Basic CURF  |               |
| Microdata: National Survey of Mental Health and Wellbeing, Australia, 2007 Reissue  | Basic CURF  | Expanded CURF |

\* Contact [microdata.access@abs.gov.au](mailto:microdata.access@abs.gov.au) for supporting documentation

## P

|   |  |               |
|---|--|---------------|
| Microdata: Participation in Sport and Physical Recreation, Australia, 2009-10 |  | Expanded CURF |
| Microdata: Patient Experiences in Australia, July 2009 to Dec 2009            |  | Expanded CURF |
| Microdata: Personal Fraud, Australia, 2007                                    |  | Expanded CURF |
| Microdata: Personal Safety Survey, Australia, 2005 Reissue                    |  | Expanded CURF |
| Microdata: Pregnancy and Employment Transitions, Australia, Nov 2005          |  | Expanded CURF |

## R

|  |             |  |
|--|-------------|--|
| Microdata: Rental Investors, Australia, Jun 1997 | Basic CURF* |  |
| Microdata: Rental Investors, Australia, Jun 1993 | Basic CURF* |  |
| Microdata: Rental Tenants, Australia, Apr 1994   | Basic CURF  |  |

\* Contact [microdata.access@abs.gov.au](mailto:microdata.access@abs.gov.au) for supporting documentation

## T

|                                      |            |               |
|--------------------------------------|------------|---------------|
| Microdata: Time Use, Australia, 2006 | Basic CURF | Expanded CURF |
| Microdata: Time Use, Australia, 1997 | Basic CURF | Expanded CURF |
| Microdata: Time Use, Australia, 1992 | Basic CURF |               |

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V

|  |             |
|--|-------------|
| Microdata: Voluntary Work, Australia, 2000 | Basic CURF* |
|--|-------------|

\* Contact [microdata.access@abs.gov.au](mailto:microdata.access@abs.gov.au) for supporting documentation

W

|  |            |               |
|--|------------|---------------|
| Microdata: Women's Safety, Australia, 1996                   | Basic CURF |               |
| Microdata: Work Related Injuries, Australia, 2009-10 Reissue |            | Expanded CURF |

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## **ABS/Universities Australia Agreement**

The ABS/Universities Australia Agreement provides a range of products and services to universities. Participating Australian universities are listed on the [ABS/Universities Australia Agreement participating universities web page](#).

Under the Agreement, staff and students are not individually invoiced for their use of the priced ABS products and services that are covered under the Agreement. This is because Universities Australia has paid for access on behalf of participating universities. Staff and students of these universities may use the products and services for the purposes of research, teaching and permitted commercial uses.

More information about the products and services provided by the Agreement and how to apply for access is provided below.

### **PRODUCTS AND SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE AGREEMENT**

#### **ABS CURFs**

Confidentialised Unit Record Files (CURFs) are released to authorised users for approved purposes of statistical analysis and research. Extensive information about CURFs is linked from the [Microdata Entry Page](#), including:

- [About CURF microdata](#)
- [How to apply for CURF microdata](#)
- [Expected and available microdata](#)

#### **ABSDL**

Information about ABS Data Laboratory (ABSDL) is provided on the [About the ABS Data Laboratory web page](#). Under the current Agreement, each authorised user in a participating university may access the ABSDL for:

- three 3.5 hour user sessions
- use standard statistical analysis packages (SAS, SPSS or Stata)
- use Basic or Expanded ABS CURFs that users have already been approved to access.

Loading of other statistical packages or software, additional user sessions beyond the initial three, additional concurrent users, or creation of Specialist CURFs will incur additional charges outside the Agreement.

#### **Statistics New Zealand Basic CURFs**

Like the ABS, Statistics New Zealand releases CURFs to approved researchers. Under the Agreement, New Zealand Basic CURFs are available to Australian university researchers via the [ABS Remote Access Data Laboratory \(RADL\)](#).

Access to Statistics New Zealand Basic CURFs is subject to approval by Statistics New Zealand. See [ABS/SNZ reciprocal CURF access arrangements](#) for information on how to apply for access to SNZ CURF Microdata.

#### **Census and Survey TableBuilder**

TableBuilder is an online tool for creating tables from ABS Census or Survey data. Starting with an empty table, data variables can be selected for cross-tabulation. Tables can be saved within TableBuilder or exported in CSV, Excel or SDMX format.

Census and Survey data are split into separate online tools. For more information about these products, see:

[Census TableBuilder](#)  
[Survey TableBuilder](#)

#### **Luxembourg Income Study**

The Luxembourg Income Study (LIS) is a cross national data archive located in Luxembourg. The Agreement provides access to LIS data for Australian researchers. Access is subject to users registering to use LIS through signing an annual pledge and submitting this to LIS. For information about LIS, refer to the [Luxembourg Income Study website](#).

### **PERMITTED COMMERCIAL USE UNDER THE AGREEMENT**

Permitted Commercial Use includes:

- consultancy services for a third party, based on CURFs
- statistical and other reports and publications produced from CURFs, and

- teaching materials developed from CURFs.

Note that staff and students of participating universities when acting in a private capacity are not included in the Agreement. Secondary distribution of ABS CURFs or microdata is not a Permitted Commercial Use and is explicitly forbidden. Contact [microdata.access@abs.gov.au](mailto:microdata.access@abs.gov.au) if you are unsure if your proposed use of the products and services falls into the above categories.

This page first published 24 July 2006, last updated 17 April 2013



## **ABS/Universities Australia Agreement participating universities**

The following universities participate in the ABS/Universities Australia Agreement:

Australian Catholic University  
Australian National University  
Bond University  
Central Queensland University  
Charles Darwin University  
Charles Sturt University  
Curtin University of Technology  
Deakin University  
Edith Cowan University  
Flinders University  
Griffith University  
James Cook University  
La Trobe University  
Macquarie University  
Monash University  
Murdoch University  
Queensland University of Technology  
RMIT University  
Southern Cross University  
Swinburne University of Technology  
University of Adelaide  
University of Ballarat  
University of Canberra  
University of Melbourne  
University of New England  
University of New South Wales (includes Australian Defence Force Academy)  
University of Newcastle  
University of Notre Dame  
University of Queensland  
University of South Australia  
University of Southern Queensland  
University of Sunshine Coast  
University of Sydney  
University of Tasmania  
University of Technology, Sydney  
University of Western Australia  
University of Western Sydney  
University of Wollongong  
Victoria University

### **Related links:**

[Frequently Asked Questions. Is my University part of the ABS/Universities Australia CURF Agreement?](#)  
[Services for Universities](#)

This page last updated 4 July 2013

## **Microdata contacts**

### **Your Organisation**

Each organisation approved to use microdata has appointed a Contact Officer to manage microdata use and liaise with the ABS on microdata matters. Your organisation's microdata Contact Officer is listed in MiCRO, the ABS' online application management system.

### **ABS**

Alternatively, contact ABS Microdata Access Strategies:

**Email:** [microdata.access@abs.gov.au](mailto:microdata.access@abs.gov.au)

**Phone:** 02 6252 7714

**Fax:** 02 6252 8132

**Address:** Microdata Access Strategies  
Australian Bureau of Statistics  
Locked Bag 10  
Belconnen ACT 2616

This page first published 24 July 2006, last updated 27 March 2012

## About CURF Microdata



### What is a CURF?

A Confidentialised Unit Record File (CURF) is a file of responses to ABS surveys or censuses that have had specific identifying information about persons and organisations confidentialised. CURFs contain the most detailed information available from the ABS.

### Why is CURF Microdata confidentialised?

The Census and Statistics Act includes a legislative guarantee to respondents that their confidentiality will be protected. This is fundamental to the trust the Australian public has in the ABS, and that trust is in turn fundamental to the excellent quality of ABS information. Without that trust, survey respondents may be less forthcoming or truthful in answering our questionnaires.

For more information on confidentiality, see the Confidentiality Information Series from the National Statistical Service web page.

### How are microdata confidentialised?

The most basic of the techniques employed by the ABS involves removing all identifying information, such as names and addresses. Additionally, the data items that are most likely to enable identification of unit records are only released in broad categories. For example, while survey questionnaires may capture your home or business address, microdata may only be released at the State or Territory level.

For more information, see 'Avoiding inadvertent Disclosure' and 'Microdata' on our web page How the ABS keeps your information confidential.

### How much does a CURF cost?

CURF Microdata access is priced in accordance with ABS Pricing Policy and Commonwealth Cost Recovery Guidelines. Access to CURFs is charged **per organisation** not per person. Additional users of CURFs in an organisation will not incur additional charges. ABS does not charge an annual or renewal fee for access. For information on prices and how to pay, see our Microdata prices.

### Available datasets

See our Expected and available Microdata.

A snapshot of the application process can be found on the How to Apply for Microdata page. Applications are completed online using the ABS MiCRO system. Clients will be required to agree to terms and conditions of use before submitting applications.



This page first published 15 June 2011, last updated 15 March 2013

## Microdata prices

Microdata access is priced in accordance with ABS Pricing Policy and Commonwealth Cost Recovery Guidelines. Access to CURFs and Survey TableBuilder datasets is charged **per organisation**, not per person. Additional users of CURFs and Survey TableBuilder datasets in an organisation will not incur additional charges. ABS does not charge an annual or renewal fee for access.

### Prices

| Format  | Price (incl. GST)    |
|---|----------------------|
| Basic or Expanded CURF  | \$1,620              |
| Basic and Expanded CURF purchased concurrently (bundle)             | \$2,430              |
| Survey TableBuilder - per dataset                                   | \$890                |
| ABS Data Laboratory first session (3.5 hours or part thereof)       | \$2,715              |
| Additional ABS Data Laboratory sessions (3.5 hours or part thereof) | \$585                |
| Specialist CURF prepared to client's data requirements              | Price on application |

A CURF 'bundle' is the concurrent purchase of both Basic and Expanded versions of a CURF via a single CURF application. ABS is able to offer the bundled price because the cost of processing a single application for both access formats is less than that of processing two separate applications. The bundle is only available where the requested CURF has been released in both Basic and Expanded formats.

For more information about the pricing of Specialist CURFs contact [microdata.access@abs.gov.au](mailto:microdata.access@abs.gov.au).

### Census TableBuilder prices

For pricing and access in relation to 2006 Census TableBuilder, refer to the 2006 Census of Population and Housing Product Brief.

Information on 2011 Census TableBuilder prices can be found in the Information Paper: Census of Population and Housing - Products and Services, 2011.

### How to pay

An invoice will be mailed to the organisation following approval by ABS of the application for CURFs, Survey TableBuilder or Census TableBuilder. Staff and students of universities participating in the ABS/Universities Australia Agreement will not be invoiced. This is because Universities Australia has paid for access on behalf of participating universities.

This page last updated 19 July 2012

## Access Modes and Levels of Detail

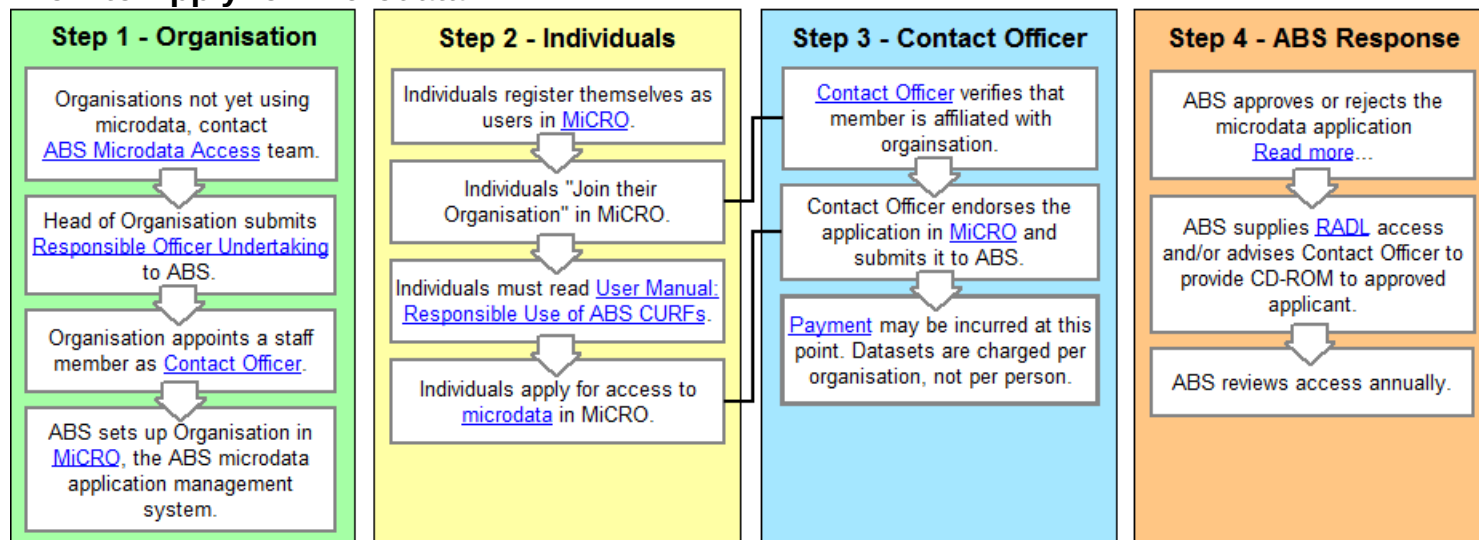
There are a number of different ways to access ABS Microdata. Depending on the complexity of your analysis and the required level of detail for data items, you can choose a product suitable for your needs.

- The Expected and available Microdata page shows the access modes available for each Microdata product
- Access to microdata products is charged. For information on prices and how to pay, see Microdata Prices.

| Access mode                                    | TableBuilder  | DataAnalyser<br>Coming soon!   | Microdata Desktop<br>Basic CURF  | Microdata Remote<br>Expanded CURF   | Data Laboratory<br>(Expanded or Specialist<br>CURFs)   |
|--|---|--|--|---|--|
| Media  | Web   | Web  | CD-ROM   | Remote Access Data Laboratory<br>(RADL)<br>accessed via web   | On site at ABS offices   |
| Statistical and programming knowledge required | Low   | Medium   | Medium   | High  | High   |
| Data level of detail                           | Most detailed   | Most detailed  | Less detailed  | More detailed   | More detailed  |
| Benefits                                       | <p>Customise own tables and graphs</p> <p>Output automatically confidentialised</p> <p>Tables saved and exported in CSV, Excel, SDMX, formats</p>   | <p>Create summary tables and scatterplots</p> <p>Use range of analysis techniques available, eg linear robust, logistic binomial, multinomial, probit, poisson</p> <p>Output automatically confidentialised</p> <p>Tables saved and exported in CSV, PNG and TXT formats</p> | <p>Work on own computer</p> <p>Use statistical packages and versions installed on own computer</p> | <p>More detailed data analysis possible</p> <p>SAS, Stata and SPSS software provided within system</p> <p>Most output returned to client automatically</p>  | <p>Complex data analysis possible without code restrictions</p> <p>SAS, Stata and SPSS software provided within system</p> <p>Additional software may be installed (additional fee applicable)</p> |
| Restrictions                                   | <p>Charged product</p> <p>Users agree to Terms &amp; Conditions of use</p> <p>Unit records remain with in ABS IT environment</p> <p>Restrictions apply to the nature of queries</p> <p>Internet access required</p> | <p>Charged product</p> <p>Users agree to Terms &amp; Conditions of use</p> <p>Unit records remain with in ABS IT environment</p> <p>Restrictions apply to the nature of queries</p> <p>Internet access required</p>  | <p>Charged product</p> <p>Users bound by legal undertaking</p>                                     | <p>Charged product</p> <p>Users bound by legal undertaking</p> <p>Unit records remain within ABS IT environment</p> <p>Restrictions apply to the nature of queries, and to the nature and size of outputs</p> <p>Internet access required</p> | <p>Charged product</p> <p>Users bound by legal undertaking</p> <p>Unit records remain within ABS IT environment</p> <p>All output is manually cleared</p> <p>Only available on ABS premises</p>    |
| How to apply for datasets                      | Register and apply in the Registration Centre   | Coming soon!   | Register and apply in MiCRO  | Register and apply in MiCRO   | Contact<br>microdata.access@abs.gov.au   |



## How to Apply for Microdata



## **CURF Undertaking**

To enable access to CURFs, each organisation's Responsible Officer must submit a CURF Undertaking to the ABS.

The CURF Undertaking is required by Clause 7 of the Statistics Determination 1983 under the Census and Statistics Act 1905. This states that, prior to CURF release to an organisation, a Responsible Officer must undertake to ensure that the organisation will abide by the conditions of use of CURFs.

The CURF Undertaking covers all members of the organisation and must be reviewed annually by the Responsible Officer.



[Undertaking By A Responsible Officer Of An Organisation .pdf](#)

### **Related Links**

[Who can qualify as a Responsible Officer?](#)

[CURF User Tool Kit](#)

[Contact Officer Tool Kit](#)

[Responsible Officer Tool Kit](#)

This page first published 4 December 2007, last updated 23 January 2014



## CURF Tool Kits

### **CURF User Tool Kit**

Use this Tool Kit for information about how to apply for CURFs and the responsibilities of CURF access



### **Contact Officer Tool Kit**

Use this Tool Kit if you have been appointed by your organisation to be a CURF Contact Officer



### **CURF Responsible Officer Tool Kit**

Use this Tool Kit if you are the person who will be signing the legal undertaking that enables CURF use in your organisation



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## Contact Officer - Tool Kit



## Contact Officer

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### Related links

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This page first published 3 October 2008, last updated 8 February 2013

# Responsible Officer - Tool Kit



## CURF Responsible Officer

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### Related links

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This page last updated 27 August 2012

# Remote Access Data Laboratory (RADL)

[Access RADL](#)

## What is the RADL?

The RADL is a secure online data query service that approved clients access via the ABS website. Within the RADL users submit queries in SAS, SPSS or Stata analytical languages against Expanded CURFs that are kept within the ABS environment. The results of the queries are automatically checked then made available to the users. Because the CURFs are kept within the ABS environment, the ABS is able to release more detailed CURFs in the RADL than are available on CD-ROM.

For further information about the type of restrictions put in place by the ABS, see the Rules and Restrictions for Use chapter of the User Manual: ABS Remote Access Data Laboratory (RADL).

## Requirements of RADL access and assumed knowledge

Remote Access Data Laboratory (RADL) users must:

- have been approved by ABS to use the CURF they wish to access in the RADL
- have familiarised themselves with the CURF documentation, including the Technical Manual and data item list relating to the CURF
- have read and understand the contents of the User Manual: ABS Remote Access Data Laboratory (RADL)
- be able to write programs in one of the analytical languages in RADL (SAS9.1, SPSS11.5 and Stata10). Note that the ABS does not provide a code advisory service so familiarity with SAS, SPSS or Stata is important
- know how to use an Internet browser
- be able to use a zip program (WinZip or equivalent programs).

## Which CURFs are in the RADL?

All Expanded CURFs are available in the RADL. The Expected and available Microdata shows which CURFs are available in Basic and Expanded formats. The page also provides a links to the Technical and Information Papers for each CURF.

## Getting started with the RADL

Information is available in the Getting Started with the RADL chapter of the User Manual: ABS Remote Access Data Laboratory (RADL).

The ABS assumes users are experienced in SAS, SPSS or Stata for code creation and does not provide advice on coding problems. Log files can be used to determine problems in obtaining output. Further information is available in the RADL Help section of the RADL. If you encounter any problems accessing or using the RADL, email the RADL Administrator.

## Related links

[MiCRO online microdata application system](#)  
[About CURF microdata](#)

This page last updated 8 June 2012

## About the ABS Data Laboratory (ABSDL)

The ABS Data Laboratory (ABSDL) is the data analysis solution for high-end data users who want to extract full value from ABS microdata. ABSDL provides an interactive environment, enabling the analysis of Basic, Expanded or Specialist (customised) Confidentialised Unit Record Files (CURFs). ABSDL provides a more responsive and interactive environment in which to analyse CURFs than that offered by the Remote Access Data Laboratory (RADL).

### Comparison of ABSDL and the RADL

|                               | ABSDL  | RADL  |
|-------------------------------|--|---|
| Access                        | On-site in all ABS Offices   | Secure remote access via the ABS website  |
| Content                       | Basic and Expanded CURFs, or a Specialist CURF customised to client's analysis requirements  | Basic and Expanded CURFs  |
| Analytical packages available | SAS9.3, SASEG, SPSS20 and Stata10.<br>Other analytical packages may be able to be provided if requested.   | SAS9.1, SPSS11.5 and Stata10  |
| Functionality                 | Interactive. No automated protections of data within the ABSDL. In the ABSDL you can open and view the entire file, and undertake cross tabulations and other forms of analysis without automated restrictions. All outputs are vetted by ABS staff before release to clients to ensure confidentiality of respondents is protected. No internet access during sessions. | Batch mode system. A range of automated protections of the data ensure confidentiality of respondents. Some commands restricted or forbidden and you cannot view the entire file. |
| Availability                  | Sessions must be booked in advance if using Basic or Expanded CURFs. Several months may be required to produce Specialist CURFs required by clients.   | Generally available 24 hours per day, seven days per week.  |
| Cost                          | Access sessions are fully cost recovered. See Microdata prices. Specialist CURFs or other client specific requirements are fully cost recovered. See below for further details   | No charge beyond CURF price. See Microdata prices.  |

### Pricing

The ABSDL service is provided on a fully cost recovered basis, with a one-off set up cost, and a per session cost. The costs includes preparation of the desktop PC, maintenance of the client's access to a CURF, as well as vetting of all output produced during the ABSDL session. Sessions are 3.5 hours or part thereof.

Loading of different analytical packages may incur additional costs.

Development of a Specialist CURF for use in the ABSDL is also cost recovered. As these are developed on a case-by-case basis the cost for Specialist CURFs may be considerable, depending on the client's data requirements.

Clients in universities participating in the ABS/Universities Australia Agreement are entitled to a specified ABSDL service - for which there is no charge to the individual user. Information about this is provided on the ABS/Universities Australia Agreement web page.

### More information

For further information please contact ABS Microdata Access Strategies at 02 6252 7714 or email [microdata.access@abs.gov.au](mailto:microdata.access@abs.gov.au).

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## Published Research Using CURF Microdata

| CURF Title  | Publications              |
|---|---------------------------|
| Adult Literacy and Life Skills  | Published Research        |
| Australian Housing  | Published Research        |
| Australians' Employment and Unemployment Patterns                       | Published Research        |
| Business Longitudinal   | Published Research        |
| Census of Population and Housing, Sample File                           | Published Research        |
| Childhood Education and Care  | Published Research        |
| Crime and Safety  | No publications available |
| Disability, Ageing and Carers   | Published Research        |
| Education, Training and Information Technology                          | Published Research        |
| Education and Work  | Published Research        |
| Employee Earnings and Hours   | Published Research        |
| Employment Arrangements, Retirement and Superannuation                  | Published Research        |
| Family Characteristics and Transitions                                  | Published Research        |
| Forms of Employment   | Published Research        |
| General Social  | Published Research        |
| Household Expenditure   | Published Research        |
| Household Expenditure and Income and Housing                            | Published Research        |
| Income and Housing  | Published Research        |
| Income Distribution   | Published Research        |
| Innovation in Australian Business                                       | No publications available |
| Labour Force and Employee Earnings, Benefits and Trade Union Membership | Published Research        |
| Labour Force and Forms of Employment                                    | No publications available |
| Labour Force and Labour Mobility  | Published Research        |
| Labour Mobility   | No publications available |
| Labour Force Status and Other Characteristics of Recent Migrants        | Published Research        |
| Mental Health and Wellbeing   | Published Research        |
| Multi Purpose Household   | Published Research        |
| National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (Health, Social)         | Published Research        |
| National Health   | Published Research        |
| National Nutrition  | Published Research        |
| Personal Fraud  | No publications available |
| Personal Safety   | Published Research        |
| Pregnancy and Employment Transitions                                    | No publications available |
| Rental Investors  | Published Research        |
| Rental Tenants  | No publications available |
| Time Use  | Published Research        |
| Voluntary Work  | Published Research        |
| Women's Safety  | No publications available |

## **Published Research - Aspects of Literacy, 1996**

### **CURF MICRODATA RESEARCH BIBLIOGRAPHY**

This page lists publications that have used the Aspects of Literacy CURF. The information was provided by the CURFs' users. ABS encourages researchers to provide citations for their published research using CURFs so that others can share the benefits of that research. This information also helps ABS understand the range of research activities undertaken using CURFs.

To submit information about your research that has used CURFs please email [microdata.access@abs.gov.au](mailto:microdata.access@abs.gov.au).

#### **2003**

Miller, P.W., Chiswick, B.R. and Lee Y.L. (2003) Schooling, literacy, numeracy and labour market success. *Economic Record*, vol. 79, iss. 245, pp.165-181.

#### **2002**

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This page first published 23 February 2007, last updated 26 September 2011



## **Published Research - Australian Housing Survey, 1994, 1999**

### **CURF MICRODATA RESEARCH BIBLIOGRAPHY**

This page lists publications that have used the Australian Housing Survey CURFs. The information was provided by the CURFs' users. ABS encourages researchers to provide citations for their published research using CURFs so that others can share the benefits of that research. This information also helps ABS understand the range of research activities undertaken using CURFs.

To submit information about your research that has used CURFs please email [microdata.access@abs.gov.au](mailto:microdata.access@abs.gov.au).

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Wulff, M. (2004) Shrinking households, smaller dwellings? Housing and the single-person households, 1981-2001 in International Sociological Association, Adequate and Affordable Housing for All: Research, Policy, Practice Metro Hall, Toronto, June 24-27, 2004.

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This page first published 23 February 2007, last updated 7 May 2010

# **Published Research - Australians' Employment and Unemployment Patterns, 1994-97**

## **CURF MICRODATA RESEARCH BIBLIOGRAPHY**

This page lists publications that have used the Australians' Employment and Unemployment Patterns CURFs. The information was provided by the CURFs' users. ABS encourages researchers to provide citations for their published research using CURFs so that others can share the benefits of that research. This information also helps ABS understand the range of research activities undertaken using CURFs.

To submit information about your research that has used CURFs please email [microdata.access@abs.gov.au](mailto:microdata.access@abs.gov.au).

### **2005**

Gray, M.C. and Hunter, B.H. (2005) The effectiveness of Indigenous job search strategies. *Economic Record*.

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Cuthbert, D. (2004) Labour market outcomes of Australians. PhD thesis, Monash University, Victoria.

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## Published Research - Business Longitudinal Survey, 1994-1998

### CURF MICRODATA RESEARCH BIBLIOGRAPHY

This page lists publications that have used the Business Longitudinal Survey CURF. The information was provided by CURF users. ABS encourages researchers to provide citations for their published research using CURFs so that others can share the benefits of that research. This information also helps ABS understand the range of research activities undertaken using CURFs.

To submit information about your research that has used CURFs please email [microdata.access@abs.gov.au](mailto:microdata.access@abs.gov.au)

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Ironmonger, D 2000, 'Measuring volunteering in economic terms', In J. Warburton and M. Oppenheimer (eds) *Volunteers and volunteering*, The Federation Press, Sydney.

## **1996**

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## **OTHER MATERIAL**

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Breunig, R. 'Estimates of family labour supply in Australia and to examine financial stress'.

Hill, E., Pocock, B., and Elliot, A. (eds), 'The New Discrimination and Childcare, in *Kids Count: Better Early Childhood Education and Care in Australia*', Sydney University Press, Sydney. DP No. 541.

Richardson, S. 'Society's investment in children', National Institute of Labour Studies working paper WP151, Flinders University.

Temple, J. 'Economic activity of older persons aged 55 years and over', PhD thesis, Australian National University, Canberra.

This page first published 23 February 2007, last updated 13 September 2012

## **Published Research - Voluntary Work Survey, 2000**

### **CURF MICRODATA RESEARCH BIBLIOGRAPHY**

This page lists publications that have used the Voluntary Work Survey CURF. The information was provided by the CURFs' users. ABS encourages researchers to provide citations for their published research using CURFs so that others can share the benefits of that research. This information also helps ABS understand the range of research activities undertaken using CURFs.

To submit information about your research that has used CURFs please email [microdata.access@abs.gov.au](mailto:microdata.access@abs.gov.au).

#### **2006**

Cuskelly, G., Hoyer, R. and Auld, C. (2006) Working with volunteers in sport: theory and practice. London, Routledge.

#### **2005**

Brown, J. (2005) Women and part-time work. A better balance? Labour and Industry

Brown, J. (2005) Part-time work and time for care: the consequences of four policy designs. Journal of Comparative Policy Analysis. Also presented to Australian Institute of Family Studies Conference, Melbourne, January 2005; Transitions and Risk Conference, Melbourne, February 2005; Labour Force Participation Workshop, Wellington New Zealand, April 2005; and to Academy of Social Sciences Workshop, Sydney, November 2005.

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Dolnicar, S. and Randle, M. (2004) What moves which volunteers to donate their time? An investigation of psychographic heterogeneity among volunteers in Australia. In ANZMAC 2004 (CD) Conference Proceedings of the Australian and New Zealand Marketing Academy, Wellington, New Zealand, 29 November-1 December 2004.

This page first published 23 February 2007, last updated 7 May 2010

## CURF FAQs

### About CURFs

How are microdata confidentialised?

What skills/software are required to use CURFs?

For what type of research can a CURF be used?

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### Applying for CURFs

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What are the limited licence provisions and what copyright information do I need to know?

How do I cite the CURFs I have used in my research?

Is there an Annual Renewal process for CURFs?

### Tips for using CURFs

How should I use survey weights in my model?

How do I use Replicate Weights in STATA?

This page first published 24 July 2006, last updated 20 April 2012

## **Frequently Asked Questions - About CURFs - How is CURF data 'confidentialised'?**

Confidentialised Unit Record Files (CURFs) are files from which all identifiers have been removed. Identifiers may include details such as names and addresses. In addition, it is generally necessary for the ABS to alter the records to prevent the identification of survey participants who have a rare mix of responses. All CURFs are thoroughly checked to ensure data has been confidentialised prior to their release.

For more information, see 'Avoiding Inadvertent Disclosure' and 'Microdata' on the ABS web page [How the ABS keeps your information confidential](#) and the National Statistical Service Confidentiality Information Sheets. These sheets explain and provide advice on a range of issues around confidentialising data.

This page first published 27 April 2007, last updated 20 April 2012



## **Frequently Asked Questions - About CURFs - For what type of research can a CURF be used?**

CURFs are used to undertake data manipulations requiring individual unit record data reflecting the diversity within a population. Some typical applications include production of papers, journal articles, books, PhD theses, microsimulation, modelling and conducting detailed analyses.

Data contained in a CURF is also used for producing detailed tabulations requiring data in a disaggregated form.

CURFs are an invaluable source of information for 'high-end' researchers and statisticians investigating a wide range of social or labour related topics. Our web page [Published Research Using CURF Microdata](#) provides many examples of what is possible.

Each ABS CURF has associated with it a technical manual or user guide which includes information on its microdata content, technical details and conditions of use.

Use of microdata is subject to a range of restrictions to ensure the confidentiality of survey respondents. See the [User Manual: Responsible Use of ABS CURFs](#) for clear instruction on these restrictions.

This page first published 27 April 2007, last updated 24 February 2012

## **Frequently Asked Questions - About CURFs - Does the ABS guarantee that CURF data and systems are free from errors?**

The ABS does not warrant that the CD-ROM or RADL Service or the information sourced from the Service is free from errors. The ABS will not be in any way liable for any loss, damage or injury suffered by You, or any other person consequent upon the use of the Service or the information sourced from the Service.

This page first published 27 April 2007, last updated 19 August 2009

## **Frequently Asked Questions - About CURFs - What skills are required to use CURFs?**

CURF data on CD-ROM and in Remote Access Data Laboratory (RADL) is available in SAS, Stata and SPSS formats and can be loaded to various spreadsheets. If clients do not have knowledge of these applications, they are advised to seek guidance and expertise within their organisation prior to using the CURF data. Other software packages will be evaluated by the ABS for inclusion if there is sufficient user demand.

The individual data items have fixed positions within each record of the file. If there is more than one unit type on the file, the file will be organised hierarchically.

An extensive documentation file is provided for each CURF and includes a list of data items with their start positions and lengths, code values and category labels. The documentation also provides weighted and unweighted frequencies of each code value.

This page first published 27 April 2007, last updated 24 March 2011

## **Frequently Asked Questions - About CURFs - How long will I have access to a CURF?**

ABS requires that both an individual and their organisation be approved to access each CURF.

Individuals are approved to use CURFs until completion of the Statistical Purpose for which access was granted. Expanded CURFs are subject to an annual renewal process, for further information on this process please see 'Annual Renewal of CURF Access'. After twelve months, ABS will ask if the Expanded CURF is still required for the original statistical purpose. If the CURF is still required, but the purpose of the research changes, a new Statistical Purpose will need to be submitted to the ABS.

Please email [microdata.access@abs.gov.au](mailto:microdata.access@abs.gov.au) with your new Statistical Purpose if it has changed.

Organisations have access to CURFs in perpetuity - unless that approval is explicitly withdrawn by the ABS (for example, as the result of a breach of ABS terms and conditions of CURF access). This means that access to each CURF is purchased only once by each organisation, regardless of the number of individual users within the organisation approved to use it.

This page first published 27 April 2007, last updated 24 March 2011

## Annual Renewal of CURF Access

Each year ABS requires individuals to renew their access to Expanded CURFs. ABS also requires annual renewal of the CURF Undertaking from each organisation. Basic CURFs are not subject to an annual renewal process.

Both the renewal of Expanded CURFs and the renewal of the CURF Undertaking is a condition of CURF use that has been agreed by each organisation's Responsible Officer. These and the other conditions of use of CURFs are outlined in the CURF Undertaking.

Failure to complete annual renewal may result in the withdrawal of access to CURFs for individual users and/or the organisation.

It is the responsibility of all individual users to renew their access on the annual anniversary of their approval to access Expanded CURFs. Individual users will be asked to confirm that they still require use of the CURFs and if so, whether the statistical purpose for use of the CURF has changed.

Annual renewal time is a good opportunity for CURF users to provide ABS with citations for their published research that has included use of CURFs. This helps ABS understand the range of research activities undertaken using CURFs. ABS publishes these citations on its Published Research Using CURF Microdata web pages so that others can share the benefits of the research.

### Related links:

[Responsible Officer CURF Undertaking](#)  
[Guide to citing ABS sources](#)

This page last updated 20 April 2012

The annual renewal process is currently under review, therefore the contents of this page may change in the future.

## **Frequently Asked Questions - Applying for CURFs - Do I need to apply to access a CURF that my organisation already has?**

Yes. Each person who wishes to use a CURF must be individually approved by ABS to use it - even if the organisation already holds the CURF. To apply for access, see [How to apply for Microdata](#).

Provision of CURFs to those not personally approved by ABS is a breach of the legal Undertaking signed by your organisation's Responsible Officer. Where such breaches have occurred, the ABS applies any of a range of [Penalties for breaching the CURF Undertaking](#).

This page first published 7 April 2008, last updated 27 April 2012

## CURF Undertaking

To enable access to CURFs, each organisation's Responsible Officer must submit a CURF Undertaking to the ABS.

The CURF Undertaking is required by Clause 7 of the Statistics Determination 1983 under the Census and Statistics Act 1905. This states that, prior to CURF release to an organisation, a Responsible Officer must undertake to ensure that the organisation will abide by the conditions of use of CURFs.

The CURF Undertaking covers all members of the organisation and is required to be re-submitted annually by the Responsible Officer.



[ABS CURF Undertaking.pdf](#)



[ABS CURF Undertaking.rtf](#)

### Related Links

[Who can qualify as a Responsible Officer?](#)

[CURF User Tool Kit](#)

This page first published 4 December 2007, last updated 2 December 2011

## **Penalties for Breaching the CURF Undertaking**

Subsection 19 (3) of the Census and Statistics Act 1905 provides that a person who fails to comply with the conditions outlined in the Confidentialised Unit Record File (CURF) Undertaking is guilty of an indictable offence, punishable on conviction by a fine of 120 penalty units (\$13,200) or imprisonment for two years, or both.

Individual CURF users are not required to sign an Undertaking. Rather, they are bound by the Undertaking signed by their organisation's Responsible Officer.

Additionally, under the ABS/Universities Australia Agreement CURFs are provided for research, teaching and permitted commercial uses. Other uses are in breach of that Agreement.

If at any time, you are unsure about your organisation's compliance with the CURF Undertaking or with the terms and conditions of the ABS/Universities Agreement, please contact [microdata.access@abs.gov.au](mailto:microdata.access@abs.gov.au).

### **Related links:**

User Manual: Responsible Use of ABS CURFs  
[Applying for CURF Microdata](#)

This page last updated 23 February 2012



## **Frequently Asked Questions - Applying for CURFs - Consultants and third party organisations**

### **What is a consultant?**

A consultant is a person who is undertaking research for another organisation (known by ABS as the third party organisation). Some consultants are university academics doing a research project for a government agency or other organisation. Other consultants are employed by professional firms undertaking research for government agencies or other organisations.

### **What is a third party organisation?**

An organisation which has hired a consultant is the third party organisation. ABS is the first party organisation involved in CURF access and use. An approved CURF user's organisation is the second party organisation.

### **Can consultants use CURFs?**

Yes, but only if the consultant and their own organisation (the second party organisation) are approved by the ABS to use the CURF.

The CURF application process for consultants is the same as for any other individual, except that the applicant must tell the ABS they are doing research for another organisation, and what outputs they will share with that organisation. ABS needs this information to ensure all those who need to access CURFs gain ABS approval.

### **Does the third party organisation need to be approved to use the CURF?**

If people in the third party organisation will see or share CURF microdata with the consultant then each of those people, and their organisation, must be approved by ABS to access the CURF. For example, a collaborative project where both the consultant and the third party organisation are analysing the microdata would require both parties to be approved to access the CURF.

If people in the third party organisation will not see or share CURF microdata then they do not need to be approved to access the CURF. For example, if the consultant provides aggregated data to the third party, or provides a report with conclusions drawn from analysis of the CURF, then ABS does not require the third party organisation to be approved to access the CURF.

See also [About CURF Microdata](#)

This page first published 20 September 2007, last updated 24 June 2011

## **Frequently Asked Questions - Applying for CURFs - Who can qualify as a Responsible Officer?**

In a government department, the Responsible Officer must be a Secretary of Department or equivalent head of organisation, as agreed with the ABS. In practice this requires that a release to a Department or Authority must be signed by the Secretary of the Department or in the case of an Authority the equivalent Head of the Authority.

In a private sector organisation, the Responsible Officer must be someone who has the same legal responsibility for the actions of the organisation as a Departmental Secretary does for a Department. This will usually be someone with the status of CEO, Company Secretary or Managing Director.

In a University, the Responsible Officer must be a Vice-Chancellor, Pro Vice-Chancellor, Deputy Vice-Chancellor or University Registrar.

### **Related links**

[CURF Responsible Officer Tool Kit](#)

[Organisations approved to use CURF Microdata](#)

This page first published 27 April 2007, last updated 15 November 2011

## Organisations approved to use CURF Microdata

Listed below are organisations approved by ABS to use CURF Microdata. If your organisation is not listed and you would like to apply for microdata access, please contact ABS Microdata Access Strategies on (02) 6252 7714 or email us.

| Organisation   |   |
|--|---|
| ACT Economic Development Directorate   | NSW Department of Education and Communities                                       |
| ACT Health Directorate   | NSW Department of Family and Community Services (Ageing Disability and Home Care) |
| ACT Treasury Directorate   | NSW Department of Family and Community Services (Housing)                         |
| A.T. Kearney   | NSW Department of Planning and Infrastructure                                     |
| Anglicare SA   | NSW Ministry of Health  |
| Audience Data Solutions Pty Ltd  | NSW Office of Communities   |
| Australian Catholic University   | NSW Treasury  |
| Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority                   | National Cancer Control Initiative  |
| Australian Development Strategies Pty Ltd                                    | National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER)                         |
| Australian Institute of Criminology  | National Disability Services  |
| Australian Institute of Family Studies                                       | National Institute of Economic and Industry Research                              |
| Australian Institute of Health and Welfare                                   | National Seniors Australia Ltd  |
| Australian National University   | ORIMA Research  |
| Australian Social & Recreation Research Pty Ltd                              | PricewaterhouseCoopers  |
| Baker IDI Heart and Diabetes Institute                                       | Productivity Commission   |
| Bohun Group  | Qld Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services               |
| Bond University  | Qld Department of Education, Training and Employment                              |
| Boston Consulting Group  | Qld Office of the Public Advocate   |
| Bugseye Pty Ltd  | Queensland Health   |
| CQ University Australia  | Queensland Treasury and Trade   |
| Centrelink   | Queensland University of Technology   |
| Charles Darwin University  | RDA Research  |
| Charles Sturt University   | RMIT University   |
| Commonwealth Grants Commission   | Reserve Bank of Australia   |
| Curtin University of Technology  | SA Department for Communities and Social Inclusion                                |
| David Chant Statistical Consultant   | SA Department for Health and Ageing   |
| Deakin University  | SA Department for Manufacturing, Innovation, Trade, Resources and Energy          |
| Deloitte   | SVB Group Pty Ltd   |
| Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations                  | Safe Work Australia   |
| Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs   | Sargeant & Collins Pty Ltd  |
| Department of Finance and Deregulation                                       | Singtel Optus   |
| Department of Health and Ageing  | South Australian Centre for Economic Studies                                      |
| Department of Immigration and Citizenship                                    | Southern Cross University   |
| Department of Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education | Spectrum Analysis Australia Pty Ltd   |
| Department of Infrastructure and Transport                                   | Swinburne University of Technology  |
| Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet                                     | Tas Department of Health and Human Services                                       |
| Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities | Tas Department of Premier and Cabinet   |
| Disability Services Commission WA  | Tas Department of Treasury and Finance  |
| Edith Cowan University   | The Demographers Workshop Pty Ltd   |
| Energeia   | Tourism Research Australia  |
| Essential Services Commission of SA  | Treasury (Commonwealth)   |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Fair Work Australia                            | Turning Point Alcohol and Drug Centre Incorporated          |
| Flinders University                            | University of Adelaide                                      |
| Geoscience Australia                           | University of Ballarat                                      |
| Grattan Institute                              | University of Canberra                                      |
| Griffith University                            | University of Canberra (NATSEM Pty Ltd)                     |
| Housing Industry Association                   | University of Melbourne                                     |
| Human Services Training Advisory Council       | University of New England                                   |
| Industry Super Network                         | University of New South Wales                               |
| Inspire Foundation                             | University of Newcastle                                     |
| Insurance Council of Australia                 | University of Queensland                                    |
| James Cook University                          | University of South Australia                               |
| KPMG   | University of Southern Queensland                           |
| Katrine Baghurst                               | University of Sydney  |
| Kelly Research                                 | University of Tasmania                                      |
| L.E.K. Consulting                              | University of Technology Sydney                             |
| La Trobe University                            | University of Western Australia                             |
| Living Social                                  | University of Western Sydney                                |
| MDS Market Data Systems Pty Ltd                | University of Wollongong                                    |
| Macquarie University                           | Victoria University   |
| Master Builders Australia                      | Vic Department of Education and Early Childhood Development |
| Melbourne City Research                        | Vic Department of Health                                    |
| Mercurial Insights Pty Ltd                     | Vic Department of Human Services                            |
| Monash University                              | Vic Department of Planning and Community Development        |
| Monero Research Consulting                     | Vic Department of Premier and Cabinet                       |
| Municipal Association of Victoria              | Vic Department of Treasury and Finance                      |
| Murdoch University                             | WA Department for Communities                               |
| NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research    | WA Department of Education Services                         |
| NSW Commission for Children and Young People   | WA Department of Health                                     |
| NSW Department of Attorney General and Justice |   |

## **Frequently Asked Questions - Who can access CURFs? - Can an individual apply for an ABS CURF?**

Yes. An individual who is not associated with an organisation can apply for access to an ABS CURF.

ABS grants access to CURFs in accordance with requirements of Clause 7 of the *Statistics Determination 1983* under the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*. This does not require that a person be associated with an organisation, though in practice nearly all CURF users are members of an organisation.

The requirements of CURF access are shown in the CURF Undertaking.

To apply for access to ABS CURFs please visit the [How to Apply for Microdata](#) page.

This page first published 20 September 2007, last updated 15 November 2011

## Frequently Asked Questions - Applying for CURFs - Can I use CURFs in more than one organisation?

### Can I use CURFs in more than one organisation?

Yes, users may belong to multiple organisations. This may be on a permanent or temporary (i.e. when completing a consultancy for another organisation) basis.

**Important tip** - when you belong to multiple organisations and you wish to apply for microdata you need to ensure your default setting for '**Current Organisation**' in MiCRO is set to the appropriate one. To change your default organisation, click on the trading name and press '**Set as your Current Organisation**' before applying for microdata.

Please remember, upon leaving an organisation you need to deactivate your CURF access by pressing the '**Leave organisation**' button.

This page first published 27 April 2007, last updated 1 September 2011

## **Frequently Asked Questions - Who can access CURFs? - Can overseas clients apply for an ABS CURF?**

The ABS will not generally release CURF data to overseas applicants.

Currently the ABS has a Memorandum of Understanding between the ABS and Statistics New Zealand (SNZ) for reciprocal CURF access arrangements, which allows access to ABS Basic and Expanded and SNZ Basic CURFs.

The ABS will consider, on a case-by-case basis, all other overseas applications to access CURFs.

To be considered, overseas applicants must fulfil two criteria:

1. they must generally be affiliated with an Australian university or government department, or their country's National Statistical Office (such as the US Census Bureau, Statistics New Zealand, Statistics Canada etc).
2. the study has to be demonstrably of use to Australia. Some examples of work meeting this criteria might include: producing international comparisons in an area of topical interest; an overseas organisation undertaking policy relevant work on behalf of Australia; methodological work that leads to improved data collection practices and methods in Australia; and research likely to result in Australia reviewing policy.

The ABS cannot guarantee that a CURF application from an overseas applicant will be approved. Release of CURFs to any organisation, Australian or otherwise, is always at the discretion of the Australian Statistician.

A list of National Statistical Offices can be accessed at [www.census.gov/population/international/links/stat\\_int.html](http://www.census.gov/population/international/links/stat_int.html)

This page first published 20 September 2007, last updated 24 April 2012

## **Frequently Asked Questions - Applying for CURFs - What is meant by 'Statistical Purpose' on the application forms?**

Clause 7 of the Statistics Determination 1983 allows the Australian Statistician to disclose microdata, in this case a CURF, in a manner not likely to enable the identification of the person or organisation to which the record relates and for statistical purposes only. The Statistics Determination requires that CURF information will be used only for statistical purposes.

Put simply, it is a legal requirement that applicants for CURF access supply a statistical purpose for their use of a CURF.

### **What is meant by statistical purpose?**

The statement of statistical purpose need not be lengthy but should show that there is a clear objective to the analysis and demonstrate that access to the CURF is essential to be able to undertake that analysis. Statements such as 'academic research' or 'policy research' without further detail are not in themselves adequate descriptions of statistical purpose, and will not be approved by the ABS.

You must not match, reweight, link, merge, augment or any similar references unit files. Identifying individual records to produce very fine tabulations is also not permitted.

Examples of suitable statistical purposes include:

- estimation of population characteristics to provide indicators of financial literacy of Australian households
- statistical modelling of predictors and correlates of employment and work performance among those with carer responsibilities compared to persons without these responsibilities
- use of data as input to mathematical models to enable analysis of impacts of potential policy changes in the area of health insurance
- study the relationship between disability and labour market outcomes to target future employment programmes

ABS reserves the right to seek more information from applicants if it is not able to readily determine whether an application should be approved as supplied.

For further advice on statistical purpose contact [microdata.access@abs.gov.au](mailto:microdata.access@abs.gov.au).

### **Related links**

For what type of research can a CURF be used?

Under what conditions is an Organisation provided with access to a CURF?

Can an individual apply for an ABS CURF?

This page first published 27 April 2007, last updated 24 April 2012



## **Frequently Asked Questions - Applying for CURFs - Do supervisors need to fill in an Individual User Application & Undertaking form?**

Yes. If in supervising a research project you will be examining unit record information from the CURF, you are required to apply and have approved a CURF access request.

This page first published 27 April 2007, last updated 19 August 2009

## **Frequently Asked Questions - ABS/Universities Australia CURF Agreement - Is my University part of the ABS/Universities Australia CURF Agreement?**

Not all Australian universities are party to the ABS/Universities Australia Agreement, participating universities are outlined in the ABS/Universities Australia participating universities list.

Universities not party to the ABS/Universities Australia Agreement may purchase Microdata at the current ABS list price. See the Microdata Prices page for details.

If your University is not currently on the participating list and would like to partake in the agreement please contact Universities Australia at [contact@universitiesaustralia.edu.au](mailto:contact@universitiesaustralia.edu.au).

This page first published 27 April 2007, last updated 27 April 2012

## **CURF: Frequently Asked Questions - ABS/Universities Australia Agreement - ABS/SNZ reciprocal CURF access arrangements**

A Memorandum of Understanding between the ABS and Statistics New Zealand (SNZ) allows access to ABS Basic and Expanded and SNZ Basic CURFs to researchers in universities participating in the ABS/Universities Australia Agreement and the SNZ/CONZUL agreement. The SNZ Statistics for universities page provides more information about the New Zealand agreement.

### **Applying for access**

An Australian university researcher seeking access to a New Zealand CURF must complete, submit and have approved a SNZ CURF Researcher Understanding. This Understanding will contain a statement to the effect that Australian researchers wishing to access New Zealand Basic CURFs will be bound by the access requirements of the Statistics Act as enacted in New Zealand (1975). See the SNZ Access to microdata web page for further information about applying for and using SNZ CURFs. New Zealand CURFs are available to Australian users on CD-ROM only.

A New Zealand university researcher seeking access to an Australian CURF should complete the standard ABS CURF application process on the ABS website. See the How to Apply for Microdata page. Access to Australian CURFs for New Zealand applicants is available in the Remote Access Data Laboratory (RADL) only.

### **Terms and conditions**

Breaching the terms and conditions of CURF access in either Australia or New Zealand may result in the imposition of penalties in both countries. Such penalties may include withdrawal of individual or organisational access to all SNZ and ABS CURFs.

This page first published 24 July 2006, last updated 15 November 2011

## **Frequently Asked Questions - ABS/Universities Australia Agreement - Can I use CURFs obtained under the Agreement for an externally funded research project?**

The ABS/Universities Australia Agreement for 2009-11 includes use for research, teaching and permitted commercial uses. For more information see ABS/Universities Australia CURF Agreement..

If you are in any doubt as to whether your intended use of a CURF is authorised under the Agreement you must contact [microdata.access@abs.gov.au](mailto:microdata.access@abs.gov.au) or call (02) 6252 7714 before putting the CURF to that particular use.

This page first published 27 April 2007, last updated 24 March 2011

## **Frequently Asked Questions. ABS/Universities Australia Agreement. Does the Agreement give me access to Luxembourg Income Study?**

Yes. Access to the [Luxembourg Income Study](#) (LIS) is available as part of the ABS/Universities Australia Agreement.

LIS is a depository for anonymised household survey microdata provided by international agencies. The range of household income data surveys represented in LIS includes ABS Income and Housing Costs microdata. Microdata from all international collections included in LIS have been adjusted to provide income, demographic, labour market and expenditure information on three different levels: household, person and child. Almost all the microdata files in LIS cover multiple reference periods.

Access to LIS for researchers in universities is managed by LIS itself. For more information please consult the LIS via the website link provided above.

This page first published 12 September 2007, last updated 31 March 2009

## **Frequently Asked Questions - ABS/Universities Australia CURF Agreement - Can I use a CURF obtained under the ABS/Universities Australia Agreement as the basis for applying for an ARC or NHMRC grant?**

Yes. As long as your university is a party to the ABS/Universities Australia Agreement and the CURF will be used to support a pure research project funded by the ARC and/or the NHMRC.

This page first published 27 April 2007, last updated 12 January 2009

## **Frequently Asked Questions - Obligations, Liabilities and Penalties - Obligations of CURF Users**

Access to ABS CURFs includes responsibilities and commitments on the part of the user and their organisation.

- Before applying for CURF access, applicants must read the User Manual: Responsible Use of ABS CURFs and adhere to the obligations it describes regarding use of CURFs. This information is also available in the CURF application system, MiCRO.
- If an individual user leaves their organisation they must inform the ABS 10 working days prior to departure.

For information on penalties resulting from a breach of obligations in the CURF Application and Undertaking form see - Penalties for Breaching the CURF Undertaking

This page last updated 24 February 2012

## **Frequently Asked Questions - Obligations, Liabilities and Penalties - Under what conditions is a CURF released?**

CURFs are released at the discretion of the Australian Statistician after an intensive assessment process conducted by the ABS Micro-data Review Panel. CURFs may be released on CD-ROM, via the Remote Access Data Laboratory (RADL) or through the ABS Data Laboratory (ABSDL), depending on the level of detail provided in the file.

This page first published 27 April 2007, last updated 4 July 2008



## **Frequently Asked Questions - About CURFs - For what type of research can a CURF be used?**

CURFs are used to undertake data manipulations requiring individual unit record data reflecting the diversity within a population. Some typical applications include production of papers, journal articles, books, PhD theses, microsimulation, modelling and conducting detailed analyses.

Data contained in a CURF is also used for producing detailed tabulations requiring data in a disaggregated form.

CURFs are an invaluable source of information for 'high-end' researchers and statisticians investigating a wide range of social or labour related topics. Our web page [Published Research Using CURF Microdata](#) provides many examples of what is possible.

Each ABS CURF has associated with it a technical manual or user guide which includes information on its microdata content, technical details and conditions of use.

Use of microdata is subject to a range of restrictions to ensure the confidentiality of survey respondents. See the [User Manual: Responsible Use of ABS CURFs](#) for clear instruction on these restrictions.

This page first published 27 April 2007, last updated 24 February 2012

## **Frequently Asked Questions - Obligations, Liabilities and Penalties - Can I share statistical output from a CURF?**

Tables or other aggregated output (for example, averages, model parameters) released as 'general output' via the Remote Access Data Laboratory (RADL) or developed as output by users of CD-ROM CURFs may be disclosed or disseminated by the user.

Certain output from RADL may be labelled as 'Keep Secure'. This classification requires that the output be treated as highly confidential at all times. 'Keep Secure' output includes any printouts of unit record information, as well as analytical output that has been designated as 'Keep Secure'.

RADL 'Keep Secure' output cannot be shared between users who do not have access to the source CURF, nor with users in other organisations whether or not they do have access to the CURF. Such output may be used in further analysis, but cannot be published.

All Analytical results labelled as 'Keep Secure', whether they include unit information or not, must be stored in a secure environment. All such printouts should be kept under lock and key, and electronic output must be stored in password protected systems.

RADL 'Keep Secure' printouts must be securely destroyed (ie shredded) when no longer needed, and analytical output (whether or not it includes unit record information) held in an intranet must be deleted. Deletion must happen in such a way that recovery is not possible by unauthorised people.

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## **Frequently Asked Questions - Obligations, Liabilities and Penalties - Under what conditions is an Organisation provided with access to a CURF?**

Access to a CURF is granted to an organisation at the discretion of the Australian Statistician. A precondition of organisational access is that the Australian Statistician has been provided with a legally binding Undertaking setting out the Terms and Conditions under which the access is approved.

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## **Frequently Asked Questions - Obligations, Liabilities and Penalties - How do I cite the CURFs I have used in my research?**

Information or data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics must be acknowledged responsibly whenever it is used. Citing, or referencing, is important for several reasons, including acknowledging that one has used the ideas, words or data of others. Accurately citing sources used also allows others to find and use the original information.

For information on how to cite CURFs please refer to [Guide to Citing ABS Sources](#).

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## **Frequently Asked Questions - Obligations, Liabilities and Penalties - What is a RADL audit and will I be involved?**

Audits of jobs submitted to RADL are conducted throughout the year by the ABS. The purpose of these audits is to identify confidentiality issues within users' code, log or output files. These issues may arise through users failing to follow, accidentally or otherwise, restrictions or rules for using RADL.

For each job that is audited, the code, log and output files are manually inspected by ABS staff. If a confidentiality issue is identified, the user in question will be notified by email. Users are required to cooperate with any ABS audit directions in respect to their code and output.

Further information on restrictions and rules for RADL use can be found in the User Manual: ABS Remote Access Data Laboratory (RADL) (cat. no. 1406.0.55.002).

It is also a requirement that individual users comply with requirements specified in the User Manual: Responsible Use of ABS CURFs (cat. no. 1406.0.55.003).

This page first published 27 April 2007, last updated 20 April 2012

## **Frequently Asked Questions - Obligations, Liabilities and Penalties - What is a Compliance Audit?**

CURF microdata Users should be aware that their organisation's Responsible Officer has signed an Undertaking specifying that ABS officers or their nominated representatives are allowed access to all necessary documents and information for the purposes of conducting a compliance audit concerning the observance of the terms and conditions under which information is disclosed by ABS.

This audit is undertaken periodically by the ABS with a number of organisations audited on each occasion. The auditors will visit to discuss the organisation's internal arrangements for managing access to CURFs. As part of the visit the auditor will speak with CURF users about their understanding of the ABS conditions for CURF usage. The visit is also an opportunity for users to provide feedback to the ABS and to make suggestions for improvements to CURF data or associated procedures.

The audit does not generally involve checking data files or an organisation's IT systems.

This page first published 27 April 2007, last updated 19 August 2009

## **Frequently Asked Questions - Obligations, responsibilities and liability - Can I share CURFs with other people?**

No. Access to CURFs can only be granted by the ABS and is granted on an individual basis only.

Unapproved individuals must not be given access to microdata as this is a serious breach of the CURF Undertaking signed by your organisation.

Any person who needs access to CURF microdata or to non-aggregated output produced from the CURF must apply and be approved by ABS before accessing the data. This includes members of your research project team who will see or use CURF microdata or non-aggregated output from the CURF.

Sanctions outlined in the Penalties for Breaching the CURF Undertaking will be brought against organisations and individuals found to be sharing access to CURFs and/or unit record output with unapproved people.

This page first published 21 April 2008, last updated 28 February 2011

## **Frequently Asked Questions - Obligations, Liabilities and Penalties - What is the ABS liability position regarding CURF microdata?**

Except to the extent that liability may not be lawfully excluded, the ABS:

a) makes no warranty as to the suitability or fitness of the CURF for a particular purpose, or quality, accuracy or merchantability of the CURF;

and

b) accepts no liability arising from the use of the CURF.

This page first published 27 April 2007, last updated 4 July 2008



## **Frequently Asked Questions - Obligations, Liabilities and Penalties - What are the limited licence provisions to use a CURF and what copyright information do I need to know?**

Intellectual Property Rights in CURFs, including copyright in the CURF, are owned by the Commonwealth of Australia represented by the ABS. Copyright notices appearing on the CURF or on information displayed or printed by the CURF must not be removed.

An organisation using CURFs is granted a non exclusive, non transferable license by the ABS that allows Authorised Users to use the CURF for statistical purposes in accordance with the Undertaking signed by the Responsible Officer of the organisation.

Publication of data and analysis of the CURF must cite the Australian Bureau of Statistics as the source of the data and include a prominently displayed notice that the results or views expressed are those of the author, and not necessarily those of the ABS. More information about citing CURFs in published output is available on the [How do I cite the CURFs I have used in my research?](#) section of the CURF FAQs page.

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## **Frequently Asked Questions - Annual Renewal of CURFs - Do I need to renew access to CURFs?**

Yes, and no! Users of Expanded CURFs must renew their access annually with the ABS. The CURF Undertaking signed by the Responsible Officer on behalf of their organisation must also be renewed annually. However from 2011 ABS has removed the requirement for annual renewal of Basic CURFs.

For information about annual renewal please see the [Annual Renewal of CURF access web page](#).

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## Frequently Asked Questions - Tips for using CURFs - How should I use survey weights in my model?

This note on using survey weights in modelling has been provided as a response to questions that have been asked by ABS Remote Access Data Laboratory (RADL) clients regarding the use of weights in their models. It should be useful for those contemplating the use of survey weights in their models, and who would like to know how this might be accomplished.

Survey weights are most commonly used to produce estimates of aggregates, means, and quantiles for a population. The use of weights for more complex survey analysis is less clearcut. There is currently no one unified view by statisticians on if, and how, weights should be used when undertaking a modelling exercise.

The decision whether to use weights or not could have an effect on point estimates produced from the model, not only in terms of magnitude but possibly also in terms of sign and significance. Standard errors of these estimates will also differ in magnitude depending on whether weights are used. In general, use of survey weights in the model should lead to accurate point estimates. However, the standard errors of these estimates will not tend to be as accurate.

One approach that may help in partially addressing the issue of less accurate standard errors is to first normalize the weights. Normalizing of weights involves multiplying the weight of each person by a constant factor so that they add up to a desired value. For the purposes of survey analysis, it is common to normalize the weights to add up to the sample total. It is suggested that normalized weights be calculated at state level where possible due to the different sampling fractions that are used in each state.

State-level normalized weights can be calculated by multiplying the person weight of an individual within state  $h$  by the proportion of people in the state that were in the sample:

$$\tilde{w}_{i,h} = w_{i,h} \left( \frac{n_h}{N_h} \right)$$

where

$\tilde{w}_{i,h}$  is the normalized weight for unit  $i$  in state  $h$

$w_{i,h}$  is the original person weight for unit  $i$  in state  $h$

$n_h$  is the sample total in state  $h$

$N_h$  is the population total in state  $h$

### Normalization using SAS, SPSS and Stata

Support for normalized weights in modelling varies for each of the different software packages available in the ABS RADL.

In SAS: When using the LOGISTIC or PHREG procedures, users may specify an option **/NORMALIZE** when using the **weight** statement. This will cause the weights specified by the **weight** statement to add to the total sample size. Note that this option does not necessarily produce normalized weights at state-level.

In SPSS: Minimal support for normalized weights.

In Stata: When producing some models, Stata will rescale the specified weights to add to the total sample size.

### Useful references on the use of survey weights in modelling

The following references may assist your decision on whether or not to use survey weights for your particular purpose. They have been selected as an authoritative cross-section of discussion on the issue of using weights in models.

Chambers, R.L. and C.J. Skinner (eds.) (2003), **Analysis of Survey Data**, Chichester: Wiley.

DuMouchel, W.H. and G.J. Duncan, (1983) "Using Sample Survey Weights in Multiple Regression Analyses

of Stratified Samples", **Journal of the American Statistical Association**, Vol. 78, No. 383. (September), pp. 535-543.

Magee, L., Robb, A.L., and J. B. Burbidge, (1998), "On the use of sampling weights when estimating regression models with survey data", **Journal of Econometrics**, Volume 84, Issue 2 (June), Pages 251-27.1

Pfeffermann, D. (1993), "The Role of Sampling Weights When Modeling Survey Data", **International Statistical Review**, Vol. 61, No. 2. (August), pp. 317-337.

Pfeffermann, D (1996), "The Use of Sampling Weights for Survey Data Analysis", **Statistical Methods in Medical Research**, 5, pp. 239-261.

Skinner, C.J., Holt, D., and T.M.F Smith (1989), **Analysis of Complex Surveys**, Chichester: Wiley.

Winship, C., and L. Radbill (1994), "Sampling Weights and Regression Analysis." **Sociological Methods and Research** 23(2):230-257.

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## Frequently Asked Questions - Tips for using CURFs - How do I use Replicate Weights in STATA?

It is not appropriate to use the bootstrap commands in RADL. To use bootstrap commands appropriately a user needs to be able to identify the primary selection units (PSU). In the case of ABS CURFs, all respondents in the same CD (Collection District) belong to the same PSU. However, grouping respondents into PSUs significantly increases the risk of a respondent being identified so the ABS cannot release this information. To enable researchers to produce accurate variance estimates, the ABS releases the replicate weights which take the sample design into consideration, as well as any other steps in the estimation process such as non-response adjustments.

For STATA users, the ABS has made available the user-supplied *svr* suite of commands to assist users in calculating standard errors using replicate weights. Users must first use *svrset* to set the key survey replication variables for use by the other *svr* commands.

The following parameters should be specified:

- Replication method is the delete-one jackknife: *svrset set meth jk1*
- Main analysis weight is usually the person weight: for example *svrset set pw FINWT* (or equivalent)
- Variables denoting the replicate weights need to be specified: for example *svrset set rw REPWT1-REPWT30* (or equivalent)
- Degrees of freedom for variance calculation are one less than the number of replicate weights: for example *svrset set dof 59* (or equivalent)

A useful summary of replicate weights is available in the STATA help documentation: [http://www.ats.ucla.edu/stat/stata/Library/replicate\\_weights.htm](http://www.ats.ucla.edu/stat/stata/Library/replicate_weights.htm)

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## About Survey TableBuilder



Survey TableBuilder is an online tool for creating tables from ABS survey data. Starting with an empty table, data variables can be selected for cross-tabulation. Tables can be constructed, previewed and saved within Survey TableBuilder. Tables can also be exported in CSV, Excel or SDMX format.

Initially, Survey TableBuilder provides population estimates based on categorical variables (such as age and sex) from ABS household survey data. Survey data including population estimates based on continuous variables (such as income) are expected in 2013.

Survey TableBuilder has been developed to complement the existing suite of ABS microdata products and services including Census TableBuilder and CURFs. The User Manual: Survey TableBuilder, 2011 provides system information on how to build, customise, save an export tables and graphs in Survey TableBuilder.

### Available Datasets in Survey TableBuilder

- Education and Work 2011
- Characteristics of Recent Migrants Nov 2010
- Disability Ageing and Carers 2009
- Disability Ageing and Carers 2003

Datasets for other surveys will be released progressively - see Expected and available Microdata.

### Accessing Survey TableBuilder



### Don't have access yet?

To apply for Survey TableBuilder datasets complete the online application using the ABS MiCRO system. Clients will be required to agree to the terms and conditions of use for Survey TableBuilder before application: can be submitted to your organisation's Contact Officer. A snapshot of the application process can be found on the How to Apply for Microdata page.



### Price

Information on pricing can be found on our Microdata prices page.

### Related Links

User Manual: Survey TableBuilder, 2011  
Census TableBuilder  
Expected and available Microdata  
Microdata contacts

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## **TableBuilder Services and Support**

### **System Access**

To optimise performance in Survey TableBuilder there may be a limit on the number of concurrent users. Occasionally users may be asked to try again later if the system has a high volume of use.

### **Table delivery**

Survey TableBuilder will:

- at the time a user's table is submitted, acknowledge receipt of the job
- provide a submitted table status update on the 'My Tables' screen
- deliver 80% of large tables within 1 working day
- reserve the right to restrict the number of large tables that can be submitted to the queue at any one time should the number adversely effect other users

### **Helpdesk/Support service**

- we will adhere to service standards as outlined in the Service Delivery Charter - Microdata access
- information about how to build and customise tables and graphs in Survey TableBuilder is provided in the User manual: Survey TableBuilder, 2011

### **We cannot:**

- validate table results for users
- create custom tables and groups in user accounts

For further assistance please call Microdata Access on (02) 6252 7714 or email [microdata.access@abs.gov.au](mailto:microdata.access@abs.gov.au).

This page last updated 2 February 2012

## Survey Data Confidentiality

In accordance with the **Census and Statistics Act 1905**, all the data in TableBuilder are subjected to a confidentiality process before release. This confidentiality process is done to avoid releasing information that may allow for identification of particular individuals, families, households, dwellings or businesses, without impairing the usefulness of the tables.

Care should be taken in analysing tables with cells containing small numbers. No reliance should be placed on small number cells or cells with large percentage Relative Standard Error (RSE) values. Aside from the effects of the confidentiality process, sampling error and possible respondent and processing errors have greatest relative impact on small numbers and cells with large percentage RSEs.

A technique has been developed to randomly adjust cell values. Random adjustment of the data is considered to be the most satisfactory technique for avoiding the release of identifiable data in a Survey TableBuilder product. When the technique is applied, all cells are adjusted to prevent any identifiable data being exposed. These adjustments result in introduced random errors. However the information value of the table as a whole is not impaired.

The totals and subtotals in tables are also subjected to small adjustments. These adjustments of totals and subtotals include modifications to preserve the additivity within tables. Although each table of this kind is internally consistent, comparisons between tables which contain similar data may show some minor discrepancies. In addition the tables at different geographic levels are adjusted independently, and tables at the higher geographic level may not be equal to the sum of the tables for the component geographic units.

It is not possible to determine which individual figures have been affected by random error adjustments, but the small variance which may be associated with derived totals can, for the most part, be ignored.

Some RSE values may also be adjusted, to ensure consistency with the cell values.

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## Relative Standard Error

### Measuring variability due to sampling and randomly adjustment

There are two sources of uncertainty or variability associated with survey estimates that are released by Survey TableBuilder. The first source of variability is due to sampling and the second is due to random adjustment of cell counts.

#### Variability due to Sampling

Since the estimates from surveys are based on information obtained from a sub-sample of usual residents of a sample of dwellings, they are subject to sampling variability; that is, they may differ from those that would have been produced if all usual residents of all dwellings had been included in the survey. This component of variability is measured by the group Jackknife method.

#### Variability due to Random Adjustment

The random adjustment of totals and subtotals introduces another source of variability into the estimates. As these adjustments are generated in a predictable way the impact they have on estimates can be measured directly.

#### Standard Errors

The variability due to sampling and random adjustment are combined into a single measure called the Standard Error (SE). The SE indicates the extent to which an estimate might have varied by chance, because only a sample of dwellings was included, and by random adjustment.

There are about two chances in three that a sample estimate will differ by less than one SE from the number that would have been obtained if all dwellings had been included and there was no random adjustment. There is about 19 chances in 20 that the difference will be less than two SEs. Another measure of the likely difference is the relative standard error (RSE), which is obtained by expressing the SE as a percentage of the estimate.

$$RSE\%(x) = SE(x) / x * 100$$

#### SEs of proportions and percentages

Proportions and percentages formed from the ratio of two estimates are also subject to sampling errors. The size of the error depends of the accuracy of both the numerator and denominator. A formula to approximate the RSE of a proportion is given below:

$$RSE\%(x/y) = \sqrt{[RSE\%(x)]^2 + [RSE\%(y)]^2}$$

Note - this formula only holds when the x is a subset of y. It should not be used if this is not the case i.e. estimates of 'rates' as opposed to proportions.

Using this formula, the RSE of the estimated proportion or percentage will be lower than the RSE estimate of the numerator. Therefore an approximation for SEs of proportions or percentages may be derived by neglecting the RSE of the denominator i.e. obtaining the RSE of the number of persons corresponding to the numerator of the proportion or percentage and then applying this figure to the estimated proportion or percentage. This approach was adopted for the purposes of assigning the \* or \*\* to indicate a 25% or 50% RSE threshold in publications from the NHS and NHSI.

SEs may also be used to calculate SEs for the difference between two survey estimates (numbers or percentages). The sampling error of the difference between the two estimates depends on their individual SEs and the relationship (correlation) between them. An approximate SE of the difference between two estimates (x-y) may be calculated by the following formula:

$$SE(x-y) = \sqrt{SE(x)^2 + SE(y)^2}$$

While this formula will only be exact for differences between separate and uncorrelated characteristics of subpopulations, it is expected to provide a reasonable approximation for most differences likely to be of

interest in relation to this survey.

The imprecision due to sampling variability, which is measured by the SE, should not be confused with inaccuracies that may occur because of imperfections in reporting by respondents and recording by interviewers, and errors made in coding and processing data. Inaccuracies of this kind are referred to as non-sampling error, and they may occur in any enumeration, whether it be a full count or a sample. Every effort is made to reduce non-sampling error to a minimum by careful design of questionnaires, intensive training and supervision of interviewers, and efficient operating procedures.

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## About Analysis Service

The ABS is currently developing a new tool for complex microdata analysis - the Analysis Service.

The Analysis Service is a menu driven interface that enables clients to perform exploratory data analysis and regression analysis on ABS microdata. The high quality of the data is upheld as confidentialisation of the data is automatically tailored for each query. Clients can register for and purchase ABS datasets, and use the following functions and analytical tools:

- subsetting the dataset for selected variables or records
- creating new variables from existing variables
- undertaking exploratory data analysis such as producing confidentialised summary tables and confidentialised scatterplots, and
- undertaking a range of analysis techniques using families of models such as linear robust, logistic binomial, multinomial, probit and poisson regressions.

An action list provides clients with a record of previous dataset transformations, manipulations and analyses undertaken and allows clients to review and redo actions. The regression output and diagnostics are confidentialised as they are produced, and can be saved to the client's own environment, in CSV, PNG and TXT formats.

### Available Datasets in Analysis Service

ABS expects to release the Analysis Service in 2013, with the following datasets:

- Australian Health Survey, 2011-13
- Characteristics of Recent Migrants, 2010 (already available in Survey TableBuilder)
- Disability, Ageing and Carers, 2009 (already available in Survey TableBuilder)
- Learning and Work, 2011.

Datasets for other surveys will be released progressively - see Expected and available Microdata

### Accessing Analysis Service



### Other microdata services you might be interested in:

The Analysis Service complements other ABS microdata analysis tools already available, including:

- Survey TableBuilder
- CensusTableBuilder
- Basic and Expanded CURFs
- ABS Data Laboratory

### Related Links

[How to apply for Microdata](#)

[Access modes and level of detail](#)

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